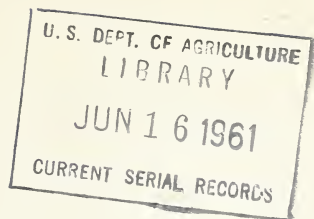


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# **RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

*Fourth Annual Report  
of the  
Secretary of Agriculture*

**SEPTEMBER 1959**

**Committee for  
RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

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- - - - -

Harry J. Reed, *Coordinator for Rural Development  
Program*

Department of Agriculture  
Washington, D. C.

The President  
The White House

Dear Mr. President:

The nation's concern over the pressing problem of surplus production of a few basic commodities on the larger commercial farms has long overshadowed the plight of small farmers operating low production units. Families on small farms produce less than 10 percent of marketed farm products. They obtain little benefit from the agricultural programs that cost the most money, and receive the most government and public attention.

The government's agricultural price support program does not and cannot deal with the complex economic and social problems that give rise to chronic low incomes in broad rural areas of the nation.

The Rural Development Program, inaugurated in 1955 at your request, has at long last directed national attention to the needs of small farmers on low production farms. Broad areas including nearly 200 counties in 30 States and Puerto Rico are receiving special attention through the Rural Development Program. Other States have underway or are planning similar work.

Land grant colleges and universities not only in States participating in the Rural Development Program but in other States as well have taken major steps to deal more effectively with low income rural problems.

Non-governmental agencies -- business and farm organizations, churches, charitable groups, and others -- are revising and strengthening their programs in areas concerned.

Departments and agencies of the Federal Government are coordinating their planning, research, and action programs directed toward these rural areas.

The report that follows indicates clearly that much progress has been made in only a few years. This report also points out needed measures to speed up and improve the program.

The Rural Development Program has become firmly established. It is widely recognized as the most effective overall approach to helping solve the difficult national problem of rural low incomes. Our task now is to further

broaden this work and constantly to improve its operation, so that more rural people will benefit.

Chronic underemployment on small, low production farms throughout the nation results in a tragic loss for all Americans. Among thousands of people living on such farms, potential skills remain undeveloped, ability to produce needed goods is never realized, and living standards remain at the subsistence level. Such conditions weaken the entire nation.

I am deeply concerned that as a nation we are still devoting a disproportionate amount of services and aids financed through public funds to the minority of large commercial farms which need such help the least. These farms are among the most efficient in the whole world. Given market opportunities, reasonably stable prices, and protection from ruinous inflation, operators of these farms can earn an adequate return while supplying the rest of the nation with food and fiber.

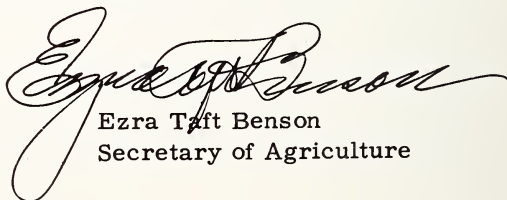
However, rural people on small, low production farms and non-farm people residing in the country and in villages without adequate income or opportunities do need additional assistance. In too many cases this assistance is not now available.

Farm expansion, often through consolidation with other units; increased job opportunities in their home areas; more and better education, training, and guidance for the young people are among the most pressing requirements of this large group of our rural people.

The Rural Development Program was inaugurated to promote and encourage a well-coordinated attack in all States to increase opportunities for millions of rural people.

This fourth annual report is transmitted on behalf of the Committee for Rural Development Program, participating agencies and private organizations, and the several thousand private citizens who are members of State and local program committees.

Respectfully yours,

A large, stylized handwritten signature in dark ink, which appears to read 'Ezra Taft Benson'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'E' and a long, sweeping underline.

Ezra Taft Benson  
Secretary of Agriculture

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## RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM July 1958-- June 1959

There has been a steady expansion of the Rural Development Program since its inauguration in 1955-56 on a pilot basis.

Experience gained in the original areas by participating groups has now resulted in a widening of the program beyond the pilot stage in many States.

To keep pace with these developments, Federal departments and agencies are redirecting many of their regular activities to serve more effectively the needs of rural people with seriously low incomes.

A major achievement is the increasing national awareness of the harmful impact on the nation's economic and social life of unemployment and underemployment among rural people. This is the basic cause of low incomes on small farms and in rural towns.

Some 200 counties have now been included in Rural Development Program areas in 30 States and Puerto Rico. Individual State Rural Development Committees have selected these areas for special attention through the services of farm, economic development, educational, employment security and other agencies and organizations. Other State leaders are planning programs based on the Rural Development approach.

In 1959\* most Rural Development counties showed an increase in the number of both farm and non-farm opportunities. Industry expansion continued. Small woodlots and timber processing enterprises yielded a higher return. In four States pilot projects to increase job guidance and placement services for rural people were started. Several areas built new marketing and processing facilities or opened farmers' marketing co-operatives. Reorientation of agricultural production on small farms continued, with vegetable, livestock, and poultry enterprises increasing in numbers and output. Vocational guidance and training for young people, as well as special campaigns to encourage advanced education, received more attention in the program areas.

All in all, 1959 was a successful year for the Rural Development Program. Concrete "dollars and cents" results are increasing in participating counties. Able leadership is coming to the fore at all levels--local, State, and Federal. More important, new opportunities are opening up for families on small, low production farms. These are the farm families that need help the most.

\*In general, period covered by this report corresponds to the fiscal year, July 1958-June 1959.

The task before us now is to broaden this work even further. Drawing upon experience gained in the original "pilot" counties and areas, we need to include additional rural communities and trading areas. At the same time, leadership at all levels -- Federal, State, and local -- must continually be strengthened to cope with the challenges of this new approach. Not the least of this task is a redirection and refashioning of government agency services and aids to meet the special problems of disadvantaged rural areas.

### Farm People Not a Uniform Group

Too often the nation's farm families are considered a uniform group, distinguishable from the rest of the population by similar methods of production and similar ways of life. Such a distinction may have been partly true 100 years ago. It is not at all true today.

Organized "Rural Development communities" help professional workers take the program to the grass roots. N25978



According to the most recent census of agriculture, forty-four percent of our 4.7 million farms have ninety-one percent of the farm product sales by value. For the other 56 percent of the nation's farms, sales of agricultural products are so small they have little effect on the total output and marketing of agricultural products.

There are fundamental differences between the larger, commercial family farms and the non-commercial farms. On the latter, lack of capital, land, and managerial ability is often a massive barrier to income improvement through better farming. Since non-commercial farms sell little, they gain little benefit from agricultural price stabilization programs. The majority of operators of these small, low production units depend largely on off-farm jobs for their cash incomes.

This contrast is brought out plainly when we review the agricultural situation in counties going forward with organized Rural Development Programs. According to the 1954 Census of Agriculture, 80 percent of farm operators in these counties sold \$2,500 worth of products or less. Value of farm land and buildings was about one-third the national average per farm. Nearly one-half the farms in these counties were classified as part-time and residential.

Where so few of the farmers have the resources for commercial agriculture and so many of the farm families depend on off-farm income, it is obvious that agricultural improvement alone cannot solve the income problem.

## Rural Development a Many-Sided Program

Working closely with local groups and agencies in the Rural Development counties and areas, land grant colleges and universities, with the assistance of all appropriate Federal and State agencies, are meeting the problem on a broad front. Industrial and other enterprise development, educational and vocational training improvement, better sanitation and health, as well as more efficient agriculture and marketing are all included. Goals of the program have gained wide acceptance in the areas concerned. Among both farm and town people there is now a better understanding of the *Rural Development* idea.

## Accomplishments in 1959

During 1959 Rural Development counties and areas in all regions of the nation continued to improve both farm and industrial opportunities. Projects resulting directly from the stimulus of the Rural Development Program, i.e., the leadership of town and community committees and the increased contribution of agencies assigned to the program, were responsible for much of this improvement.



According to reports of State Rural Development committees, approximately 320 community-wide projects to improve farms and farming were started or expanded in Rural Development counties last year. These included farm and home construction, production and management changes on small farms, improved practices, and others. In addition, more than 200 projects were aimed at more efficient commercial production of higher income products, such as vegetables, poultry, and livestock to supplant traditional row crop agriculture. Thousands of families on small farms directly profited from these activities.

Farm marketing received more attention in 1959 through the Rural Development Program. New packing plants were built, financed by local capital, cooperative marketing associations formed among small farmers, and additional market outlets established. Sixty such projects are reported in 44 counties.

In spite of a national downturn in industrial activity during part of 1958-59, some rural towns participating in the program report an impressive number of new jobs resulting from continued local industrial expansion. Wood planing and finishing, food handling and processing, clothing manufacture, feed milling, charcoal manufacture, and boat building are some of the industries reported. Due to this and other industry growth some 8,000 additional jobs are reported in 52 counties participating in the Rural Development Program. In many of these counties, combining farming with off-farm jobs is on the increase.



Farmer Roy Williams, Ouachita County, Arkansas, delivers cucumbers to a local merchant. He's increased his income more than \$700 growing this crop, one of the 260 production-marketing projects reported in Rural Development Program counties last year.  
PN-734

The special needs of youth and younger adults on low income farms in these areas were recognized through educational and training programs, community-wide stay-in-school campaigns, vocational guidance, and others. Some 145 of these projects are reported in the program area.

Other local activities of special importance started or accelerated as a result of the Rural Development Program in 1959 were forest improvement, soil and water conservation and land planning, economic base studies, farm and home planning on individual small farms, and community organization to promote better living.

However, this record by no means gives a complete picture of total economic growth and progress in the areas concerned. Reports received from some counties and areas merely refer to continuing industrial growth, without citing the exact increase in job numbers. Also, Rural Development and similar programs have acted as a catalyst, stimulating neighboring communities to "follow the leader." Such results can never be recorded in concrete project terms.

### Community Leaders Appraise Program

The impact of a well-balanced town and country development program in disadvantaged rural areas is best described by local farm, business, and other leaders active in the Rural Development Program.

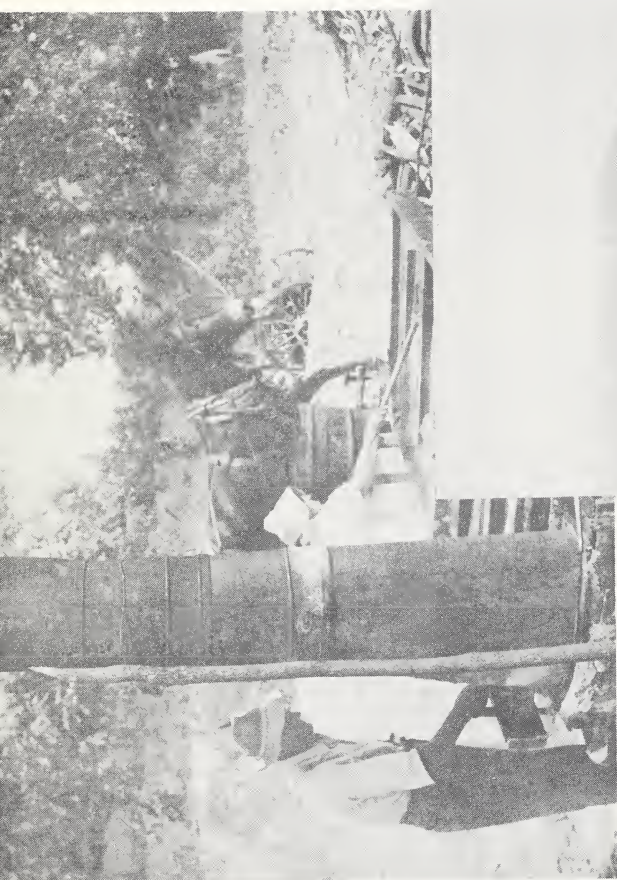
For example, the superintendent of schools in Taney County, Missouri, comments, "There seems to be a real need in every county or community for an agency to stimulate and coordinate the human and natural resources of the area.

"The Rural Development Program of Taney County has successfully filled this need by organizing, coordinating, and developing improved educational programs, community relationships, farming methods, commercial enterprises and health."

According to a women's club leader in Latimer County, Oklahoma, "The county-wide nature of Rural Development work has given a reason for greater interchange of awareness between communities. People have had an opportunity to get better acquainted, learn interests of others, participate in group activity for a common purpose."

A chamber of commerce executive, closely connected with agricultural and industrial programs in Berkely County, South Carolina, comments, "I have had frequent occasion to see the concrete results the Rural Development Program has produced . . . good results of the program will be felt in our county not only in the rural areas but as a whole for many years to come."





PN 733



Processing sorghum syrup, the old way and the new in a Kentucky program area. The new processing plant (lower photograph) is a Rural Development project.

At the other end of the country, in Washington, a Stevens County banker states, "The program is just getting started, but the farther we go with it, the more we learn about the need for resource development in each community. It is a program in which the people themselves undertake to improve conditions."

### Continued Expansion Under State Leadership

The Rural Development Program was started on a "pilot" basis in 1955-56 with formation of State committees to coordinate the work and planning at the county level. At that time, about 50 counties, plus several trade areas, were designated as pilot areas. Local projects were underway early in 1957.

The past year marked the transition of the Rural Development Program from this initial stage to a much broader, national basis. Some 200 counties (see map and list, pages 10, 25) are now included in areas designated by committees in 30 States for special emphasis and assistance, utilizing State-wide technical, educational, credit, and other sources.

Government, educational, and private agency leaders in other States have expressed their determination to begin similar programs, based on Rural Development concepts and experience in pilot counties.

Meeting of the program steering committee in an eastern Ohio county. Present are local farm, business, and church leaders, and professional farm workers. N25883





For example, in New York a pilot project is underway in the Rome-Utica area to improve opportunities on low income farms. Kansas State College is planning a research and educational program to promote job mobility of rural people. These and similar activities in States not now participating formally in the Rural Development Program are being financed with State funds.

## Federal Contribution in 1959

To keep pace with the States, Federal agencies having responsibilities in the Rural Development Program stepped up their assistance during the past year.

The Department of the Interior encouraged greater participation of field offices and constituent bureaus in 1959 to better support local Rural Development committees. Among other results, more than 100 jobs in program areas have been provided on seasonal projects of departmental agencies, such as construction in national parks, etc. Another important project is a special study of rural area development in the new State of Alaska. Recommendations based on the study, it is expected, will go forward to appropriate officials of the Alaska government by January 1, 1960.

The Department of Commerce, through its field offices and Office of Area Development, continued to assist local program leaders in development of non-farm resources. Commerce field men attended State and local meetings of Rural Development committees, and assisted in industrial promotion. Nineteen of the Department's 33 field offices located in areas concerned supplied specialists for this purpose.

Cooperating with State employment security agencies and extension services, the Department of Labor in 1959 opened demonstration projects in four States--Kentucky, Wisconsin, Tennessee, and Arkansas--to improve job development, community planning, and employment services in small rural areas. Closely related to the Rural Development Program in these States, the Labor Department project should uncover new approaches to supplying rural people with better job guidance, methods of testing skills, and industry development services.

Programs of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare have a major impact in Rural Development areas, where low incomes often result from inadequate education, poor health, old age, and other social welfare problems. The Social Security Administration through its Old Age and Survivors Insurance district managers inaugurated a campaign in Rural Development counties to qualify *all* eligible older farm families for social security payments. In Bertie County, North Carolina, for example, the number of persons qualifying for these payments was raised from 49 percent to 95 percent of those eligible.



Local health departments cooperating with Rural Development groups assisted in 235 health and sanitation projects, including health surveys, planning and construction of new hospitals and clinics, better health campaigns and sewage system building. (Education and vocational training are referred to above.)

Of special importance in rural area development are Small Business Administration credit and advisory programs. During a typical period, January through June 1959, business loans of the agency totaled 2,954 and were valued at \$143,381,000. Nine hundred and forty-five of these loans totaling \$62,600,000 were made in small towns serving rural areas and in rural communities. This is at a rate of over \$120 million per year.

During the period covered by this report, the Small Business Administration shared in a total of 63 loans for \$2,540,885 to small firms in 48 of the original Rural Development Program counties. Technical assistance of the agency for small businessmen and community development groups in rural areas was of equal importance, helping improve and expand operation of small enterprises. Off-farm jobs, new market outlets, and a generally more stable local economy were the result.

Industries in rural areas, such as this boat-building plant in a southern Indiana Rural Development county, provide most of the income on thousands of our small farms. Nearly half the farms in program areas are classed as residential or part-time. N25999



### Counties and Areas Participating, July 1959



Counties shown as follows:

Areas of two or more adjoining counties where program was started in 1956-57 shown by solid line and shading

Generalized areas where program is being broadened shown by broken line and shading



In the Department of Agriculture, the Federal Extension Service again allocated special funds to land grant colleges and universities. These in turn employed 143 agents to assist in the Rural Development Program. Twenty-one such agents now have State-wide or area-wide program responsibilities. The rest work in individual Rural Development counties.

In addition to its regular services in Rural Development counties, the Soil Conservation Service supplied 75 man years of technical assistance. As a result, a total of 2,573 farms were provided with soil survey maps and other technical assistance in planning and using soil conservation measures.

Through Federal-State cooperative programs administered by State foresters, farmers, other land owners, and processors in 102 Rural Development counties received special technical aid in forest management and product marketing. The U. S. Forest Service assigned a specialist in each of its regional offices to work full or part-time on forestry aspects of the program. More efficient forest management and promotion of wood-using industry are emerging as a major project of many local Rural Development Programs. In most counties participating, forests occupy from 40 to 85 percent of the land.

A soils technician (right) assigned to the Rural Development Program discusses plans for a small watershed project with a farmer-member of the Perry County, Indiana committee. N26014



Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation committees in 19 States increased their allocation of Agricultural Conservation Program cost-share funds to Rural Development counties, and 12 States and Puerto Rico increased rates of cost sharing for selected conservation practices in order to encourage better conservation and use of soil, water, and woodland on small farms.

In 1959 Farmers Home Administration through regular credit programs, increased amount of loans in Rural Development counties by some \$3,000,000 over those made in the previous year.

In cooperation with the States, Agricultural Research Service and Agricultural Marketing Service continued to support the Rural Development Program with important research concerning farm production, manpower, health, family living, and potential for economic development in disadvantaged rural areas. Agricultural Research Service cooperates with 22 land grant colleges and universities in this special research.

Encouraged by the Rural Electrification Administration, several local rural electric and telephone systems have supplied technical and promotional aid, leadership, and increased power and telephone services in connection with local Rural Development Programs. As one example, officials of an eastern Kentucky rural electric cooperative are also leaders in the Ashland Area Rural Development Program, contributing valuable business and promotional skills to this work.

The Farmer Cooperative Service also provided guidance for farmer cooperatives participating in the program. This agency issued two special publications to acquaint Rural Development workers with the role of cooperatives and credit unions in rural area economic growth.

Officials of Farm Credit banks and associations, which are supervised by the Farm Credit Administration, are serving as members of State and local program committees. In some cases, projects sponsored by Rural Development have been financed through these credit agencies. The trend of loans to farmers who combine farming and off-farm employment is up. In fiscal 1959 long-term mortgage credit from Land Banks to such farmers totaled 8,894 loans amounting to \$52,486,000. This compares with 6,544 loans for \$32,841,000 in fiscal 1958.

### Cost of the Program

Direct expenditures by the Department of Agriculture in 1959 for the Rural Development Program will amount to about two million dollars for educational, research, and conservation activities alone. This sum, however, does not give a true picture of financial support for the program. As indicated, many other Federal agencies are actively at work on the program supplying broad credit, technical, and other assistance. In addition, State agencies, such as extension services, and private groups,

## KENTUCKY

Lexington — Kentucky's farm agencies and rural leaders in hundreds of small towns have turned the challenge of the Rural Development Program into a long-needed opportunity to promote better living in the State's disadvantaged farming areas.

Under chairmanship of Dr. Ernest J. Nesius, associate director, Kentucky Extension Service, the program in this State has led to better farming and additional off-farm opportunities. More important, it is promoting a small town renaissance in many once-isolated Kentucky counties.

A member of the Kentucky Congressional delegation, commenting on the program in his district has observed, "The citizens of Butler County are convinced that the Rural Development Program is the soundest approach yet devised to gaining long-range economic development and growth in our rural towns and communities."

In 1959, for the second year, the three Kentucky program areas showed both farm and industry gains. Twenty-five counties are included in these areas, with three, Butler, Elliott, and Metcalf the original "pilot" counties. Some outstanding results in 1958-59:

1. Two counties reported formation of farmers' marketing cooperatives.

2. Rural Development committees in all counties waged campaigns to eliminate brucellosis in cattle. Nine of the 25 participating counties are now certified as brucellosis free. Five other counties are in the testing stage.

3. Vocational teachers of agriculture, home economics, and industrial trades conducted 68 adult classes for farm people as a special Rural Development project. Some 1,200 people were enrolled.

4. Lumber and furniture manufacture, food processing, and garment manufacturing were some of the new industries established in the three Rural Development areas in 1959. Nearly 1,000 regular and seasonal job opportunities opened up as a result.

5. More than 15 rural community improvement clubs were organized with the help of Rural Development workers.

Just as important as these concrete gains, Kentucky has been a leader in developing training and orientation programs for citizen leaders in Rural Development, as well as for agency workers. In 1959 three training meetings were held for those working on the program at the county level. The Kentucky Rural Development Committee — a top-level group representing major Kentucky agencies — also met three times during the year in two-day sessions. Through on-site visits to the three "pilot" counties, members of the group have gained a first-hand knowledge of needs in low income farming communities.

Many private groups have put money, time, and skills into the Kentucky program. Local business firms in Butler County helped finance a new health center, sponsored by the county Rural Development committee. A private foundation contributed \$900 in prize money to encourage community improvement in one county. Business firms in another county raised \$350 for the same purpose. Merchants in Warren County helped provide prize money for a stock show.

Commenting on the program in Kentucky, Dr. Nesius observes, "It has brought about an awakening of the people in Rural Development counties, resulting in a positive change of attitude and a pooling of resources for action on local problems."



such as bankers, chambers of commerce, church, and civic organizations are devoting many thousands of man hours to the program and contributing financial resources.

In 1955, Under Secretary Morse testifying on the Rural Development Program before a Congressional committee observed, "For every dollar and every decision at the Federal level, there will be many dollars and many decisions at the State and local level." In 1959, as in previous years, State and local contributions multiplied many times the "seed money" provided by the Federal government, as the following examples indicate:

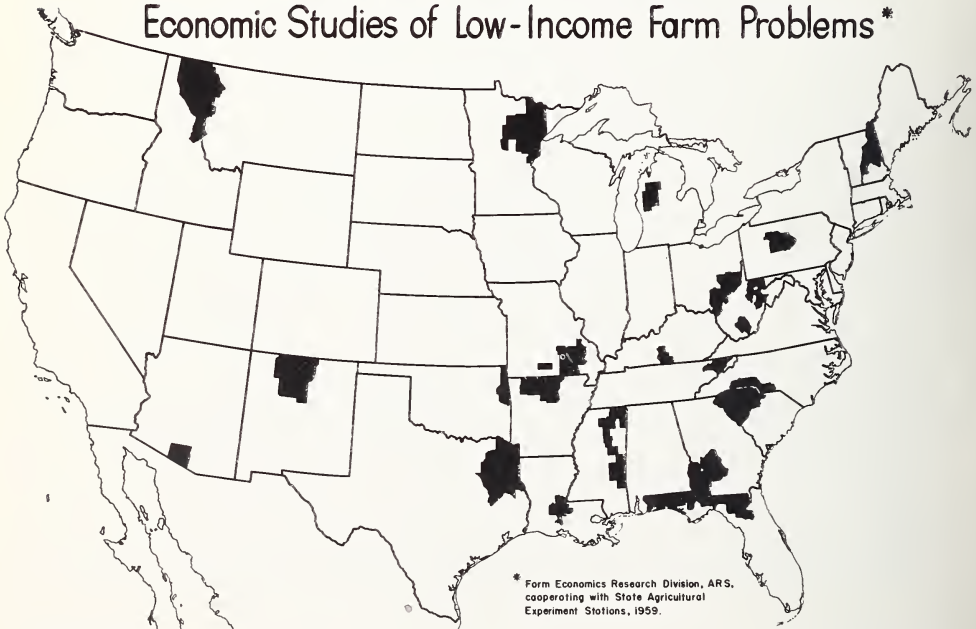
--Through the Rural Development Program, farmers in Chilton County, Alabama, organized a peach growers cooperative, and greatly expanded their market facilities with the aid of a local rural electrification cooperative, a power company, and local builders and merchants.

--In Washington County, Maine, the chamber of commerce, extension association, board of commissioners, and local newspaper are financing a motion picture to promote tourism in the area, a principal goal of the Rural Development Program there.

Since 1956 research on low income farm problems has been greatly expanded in support of the Rural Development Program. In this expanded economic research, the Agricultural Research Service has initiated studies in cooperation with agricultural experiment stations in the 22 States shown.

## STUDY AREAS

Economic Studies of Low-Income Farm Problems\*



--Rural Development leaders in Bemberg County, South Carolina, received invaluable help from the superintendent of schools in planning a county-wide adult education program.

--In Hardin County, Tennessee, welfare department personnel not only contributed their services to promotion of a home garden project among low income rural people but also adjusted their regulations permitting welfare clients to have gardens without deduction in payments they receive.

It is difficult to estimate the amount of time, effort, and resources added to the Rural Development Program in 1959 through these and hundreds of other local contributions. Certainly, it would not be an exaggeration to observe that State agencies and private groups are multiplying several times the direct Federal expenditures for the Rural Development Program.

Developing agriculture's human resources -- students learn welding in a post-high school training program sponsored by the Rural Development committee in Washington's Stevens County. PN 735



## AMITE COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI

Liberty, Mississippi,--Several goals that local citizens set at the start of the Rural Development Program in Amite County, two years ago have now become reality. Keystone of success in this south Mississippi county has been better cooperation among local groups, plus assistance of professional workers assigned to the program.

In Mississippi, where the average farm is still only 96 acres, Rural Development is promoting local industrial employment for underemployed people living on small farms. Equally important, the program is helping increase incomes of those who continue to farm full-time. Conservation of natural resources is another aim.

The Amite County Rural Development Program began in September 1957. Directing the work is a committee of businessmen, farmers, homemakers, city and county officials, and workers of State and Federal agencies.

The committee first studied the county's economic situation, set long-term goals, and then went into action. Some initial successes of the Rural Development group:

- Started a county farmers' cooperative store, affiliated with Mississippi Federated Cooperatives. Services of the cooperative include two spreader trucks to lime pastures, equipment for rent to spray weed-killing chemicals on pastures, a poultry service man to help with local marketing program.

- Began a county-wide program to eradicate brucellosis in cattle. Some 16,000 head of cattle have already been tested.

- Encouraged a local manufacturer of prefabricated houses to expand his plant, thus increasing number of employees from 60 to 200. The county seat town has also completed a labor survey, and taken other steps to attract industry.

- Planted nearly two million pine seedlings to begin a long-term program of reforestation eroded, marginal cropland.

- Made good progress in developing commercial egg, broiler, and hog enterprises to increase incomes on smaller farms. At the same time, on larger farms dairying is being improved.

Farm planning and improvement advisory work on small farms to carry out the goals of the Amite Rural Development Program is the responsibility of the County extension service.

Chairman of the county Rural Development Committee is James R. Clark, superintendent of forestry and logging of a local timber concern.

Since over 60 percent of the county's total woodland is on farms, a major Rural Development Program goal is to get every woodland owner to be a tree farmer.

W. L. Barron, a dairyman, cotton farmer, gin operator and president of the Amite County Livestock Association, credits much of the program's success to the development of local leaders and training they get throughout work on various projects. The program, he says, is "reaching the little farmers, some of whom were not directly touched before." About 70 percent of Amite County's 466,560 acres are in cultivation. There are 2,737 farms, average size being 122 acres. Average gross farm income is about \$2,000 a year.



## Local Direction, Principal Strength of Program

There is general agreement among all concerned that the main strength of the Rural Development Program results from local direction--the grassroots leadership provided by local people. Although there will be a continuing increase in Federal agency participation, primary direction of this work will remain a local responsibility--the principle of rural people determining their own goals and projects. Democratizing economic planning in America's town-country communities is indispensable to the success of this program.

This is not, however, to neglect or downgrade the role of regular Federal, State, and local government and educational agencies in promoting Rural Development goals. They must supply continuity and technical experience. Agencies can and should reappraise their services at the local level to speed solutions to low income problems and help rural families bypassed by rapid changes in commercial agriculture and rural life.

In 1959 additional agency coordinating groups were set up in program counties. These bring together farm and non-farm agencies working in a county, including Federal, State, and local personnel concerned with health, educational, welfare and local government programs, as well as agriculture. Thus the special problems of long-term economic betterment in the community can be divorced from day-to-day routine of individual agencies working on separate programs, sometimes with little coordination among themselves.

There is also wider use at both the State and local level of "*Agents for Rural Development*". These individuals, usually extension service workers, become identified with the entire program, and have broad responsibility to the State or local development committee or commission with which they work.

However, in some Rural Development counties, agents assigned to the program are still confined far too much to traditional agricultural work. In addition, some local leaders in areas concerned are missing an opportunity to utilize such personnel to supplement the work of development and planning commissions, chambers of commerce, civic associations, and similar groups.

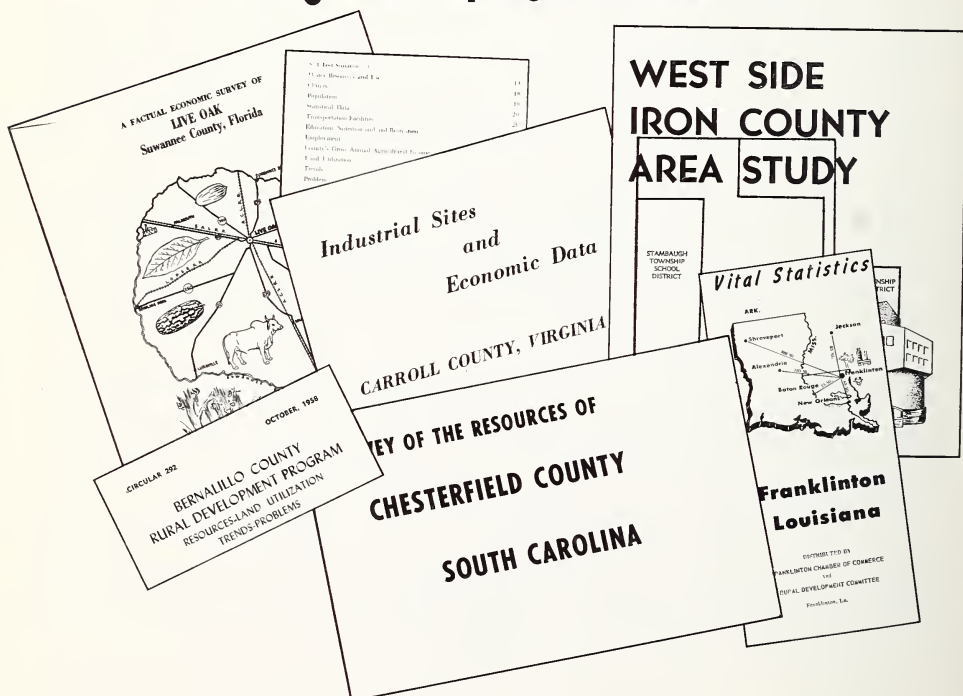
In spite of such local limitations, however, there are increasing indications of a breakthrough in developing new educational methods of bringing to local communities the vast technical resources of *all* land grant college and university departments and other research and educational agencies.

Besides administrative changes to improve existing agency support of local Rural Development programs, there continues to be a pressing need for two types of service not now widely available in disadvantaged rural areas with many small, low production farms.

The first of these is special services for young people. In the long-term interest of the entire country, all appropriate agencies have a special obligation to help the majority of rural youngsters who will not farm make the transition to non-farm pursuits and opportunities. This obligation includes vocational training, in school and out; guidance; and assistance to increase mobility and adjustment to new community conditions. Much is already being done. Vocational schools have been established in some rural sections. Under the Defense Education Act of 1958, special guidance programs are going forward in rural high schools. But the problem is vast and growing. While the nation moves slowly to modify and redirect educational programs in low income rural areas, many thousands of young people grow up and leave with little opportunity to prepare themselves for other environments.

Second, these areas also need more assistance in establishing the proper climate for industry. Increased technical aid in such projects as economic base studies, site selection and development, capital financing, local tax problems, zoning, and industrial promotion could vastly improve and make more efficient the efforts of rural towns and communities. State and Federal agencies with the requisite experience and skills can make

## RURAL DEVELOPMENT COUNTY STUDIES-- A guide to program planning



a much-needed contribution in rural communities searching for off-farm enterprises which would provide opportunities for presently underemployed people.

## Program Coordination

Improvement of agency services in support of local Rural Development committees, coordination of the many agencies involved, and planning better technical services in rural area development work were some of the major concerns in 1959 of the Committee for Rural Development Program.\*\*

National coordinator for the program, Dr. Harry J. Reed, representing the committee, visited 12 States and 8 Rural Development counties between July 1, 1958 and June 30, 1959 to counsel and advise with State and local leaders. In addition, he has participated in regional and national conferences, and met with representatives of private organizations interested in the program.

In May 1959 a week-long national workshop was held in West Virginia, under auspices of the committee, to train agency personnel assisting in the Rural Development Program. Attended by 200 persons working on the program in the 30 participating States plus observers from 4 other States, the workshop included training sessions in best methods of promoting farm, industry, and community development and increasing opportunities for rural people. Among prominent speakers who addressed the group were the Secretary of Agriculture; Dr. Karl Brandt, member of the Council of Economic Advisers; Dr. David S. Weaver, director of extension and Dr. Brooks James, director of instruction, North Carolina State College of Agriculture; Dr. Randall Klemme, director of economic development, Northern Natural Gas Company; Dr. E. O. Moe, Rural Sociology Department, Michigan State University; and Under Secretary of Agriculture True D. Morse, chairman, Committee for Rural Development Program.

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All of the efforts described in this report are directed toward the principal aim of the Rural Development Program:

Helping rural area leaders better understand broad national trends in agriculture and the national economy as these affect their communities, and promote resource adjustment in the light of such trends. This means encouragement of economic family farm units and marketing enterprises, promotion of rural industries and other enterprises, counseling for young people, industrial training in the schools, more efficient land use, and above all closer town-country cooperation on mutual problems.

\*\*Members listed inside cover.

## BERTIE COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA

Windsor -- Bertie County, in North Carolina's fertile northern coastal area, is offering a good example of what rural people can accomplish when they work together for their own betterment.

Utilizing the Rural Development Program, people around Windsor have taken stock of their resources and organized several highly successful projects to increase incomes and improve living on small farms.

In less than two years, they built a new produce market, started a commercial vegetable industry, and doubled commercial broiler production. In addition, a community-wide campaign has qualified almost all eligible farm families for social security. The number of rural homes with telephones has been doubled.

These improvements just didn't happen. They are part of a determined effort on the part of the people to raise family incomes, and to share in the nation's prosperity.

Located between the Chowan and Roanoke Rivers in flat, fertile coastal farm country, Bertie faces the same problems as many rural counties with widespread underemployment on small farms--low family income, lack of diversification, and lack of off-farm employment.

Late in 1957 the machinery was set up in Bertie to put the Rural Development Program in operation. Citizen committees were formed to supply day-to-day leadership. North Carolina's Cooperative Extension Service, using special Federal funds, placed additional workers in the county to assist these leaders. Soil Conservation Service also strengthened its local staff for the program.

At the start, the Bertie Rural Development group set out to improve both vegetable production and marketing. North Carolina State College supplied specialists for a county-wide market survey. Local businessmen, working with program committees organized a produce company and raised some \$70,000 to build a market. With a new market outlet available, farmers throughout the county agreed to start raising quality products. Agents assigned to the program worked intensively with these farmers to improve product quality.

Results of the project are impressive: In 1958, two new crops, watermelon and sweet potatoes, brought \$142,000 additional income to growers in Bertie County. In two years, the vegetable industry has grown from practically nothing to 1,700 acres.

Another county-wide effort of great importance to farm people was the telephone project. The Bertie Rural Development Committee found that only 120 farm homes had telephones, although their house-to-house survey showed an additional 570 families wanted telephones. After two years of work by the committee, telephones have now been installed in 150 farm homes, with 150 additional homes expected to have service in a short time.



As in other projects, the Rural Development Committee acted as a "catalyst," making surveys, preparing data, working with telephone company representatives on details.

Commenting on leadership of the Bertie program, County Agent Harry Q. Simmons states, "The people develop and carry out their own program, with assistance from professional workers."

As a local newspaper stated in a recent editorial, "These agents only carry out the day-to-day work of the Rural Development Program . . . It is still up to us, the people who call Bertie home, to provide the real stuff -- the money, work, interest, and backing."

Bertie's Rural Development Committee is divided into three subcommittees for agriculture; industrial development; and health, education, and welfare.

The overall committee represents a cross section of local people, and is therefore prepared to deal with most problems facing the county. The Committee is free to call on Rural Development professional workers for assistance "across the board" in farm, industry, and family living projects.

Bertie badly needs more industrial payrolls. Total farm income amounts to \$17 million, while the industrial payroll is less than \$2 million. A recent survey of the Rural Development committee showed that some 1,000 adults are interested in industrial employment.

Long-range plans, therefore, call for more industry promotion. The committee, assisted by professional workers and several State agencies, has already completed an economic base study of the county. Using information obtained through the survey, they've also issued a 60-page industrial brochure, telling about county resources and economic potential. The brochure will be distributed to interested firms through the State Department of Conservation and Development, and other State agencies and firms.

County Agent Simmons believes future industry, like most present plants in Bertie, will depend heavily on forest products. Seventy percent of the county is in forests.

According to Mr. Simmons, "rural development" is not new. "We have had rural development ever since we have had rural people," he says. "But Rural Development on an organized scale like this is new."

## THE UPPER PENINSULA, MICHIGAN

Marquette -- Michigan's Upper Peninsula, across the Mackinac Straits from the rest of the State, is an area of contrasts. Mining and lumbering have been mainstays of the area's economy. Yet agriculture is important, and thousands of Upper Peninsula families live on small, low production farms.

Major problems in the area are need for more income opportunities; improved community facilities, such as schools, roads, and hospitals; and more efficient land use.

To help people on the peninsula improve opportunities, Michigan State University in 1957 set up an "Upper Peninsula Extension Center" at Marquette. The center serves as a focal point for making available all educational resources of the university to communities throughout the peninsula, and includes specialists serving in the fields of general education, vocational education, community development, and program promotion. Through the Rural Development Program, added workers have also been placed in selected counties.

Rural Development has now "been woven into the entire fabric of the Cooperative Extension program in the Upper Peninsula," in the words of a recent Michigan State University report.

Citizen leaders out through the Upper Peninsula's 15 counties have organized resource development groups to tie their work closer to that of the new center, and better utilize its resources.

And the experimental Michigan program has produced some impressive results in its first few years of operation:

- County extension agents joined with citizen leaders in 10 counties to promote better land use through special zoning programs. In one of these counties, for example, five communities now have zoning ordinances as a result.

- Personnel of the Upper Peninsula Center helped develop training programs for some 1,500 people working in the growing tourist business. One-hundred and twenty-five businessmen serving tourists also attended special management classes.

- Area farmers have turned to new crops, more efficiently produced for new sources of income. In Delta County, for example, there's been a big expansion in production and canning of peas and beans. The county is also field testing vegetable crops on demonstration "resource development" plots.

- A few counties have set up a new "rural counseling service" to advise families on small farms about needed farm and off-farm adjustments. The service is staffed by community leaders in business, banking, farming, education, and local government.

- Through expanded and reoriented 4-H Club activities, young people in rural areas are receiving vocational counseling and guidance, not available before.

Commenting on the goals of the experimental program, Paul A. Miller, Provost of Michigan State University, observes, "... considerable progress has been made in reference to achieving these goals which are truly pioneering and exemplary in university adult education."

Michigan is a good example of State leaders fashioning the Rural Development Program to meet local conditions, a keystone of program operation throughout the U. S.

## SELECTED RELEASES

Following is a selection of publications, statements, and articles of particular interest:

*Rural Resource Leaflets*, issued by the Committee for Rural Development Program, Washington, D. C. (Chairman is Under Secretary of Agriculture True D. Morse).

1. *Rural Development Program*, revised May 1959
2. *Forests in Rural Development*, October 1957
3. *Co-ops Have a Place in Rural Community Progress*, May 1958
4. *How Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Benefits Your Community*, September 1958 (400,000 copies of this leaflet have been distributed.)
5. *Using Your Community's Health Resources*, August 1958
6. *Small Business, A Keystone of Rural Area Development*, October 1958
7. *Credit Principles, A Guide for Rural Communities*, February 1959
8. *The Rural Credit Union - A Place to Save and Borrow*, July 1959

*The Banker's Part in Rural Development*, address by Charles N. Shepardson, Member, Board of Governors, Federal Reserve System, before annual convention of the West Virginia Bankers Association, July 1959.

*Rural Development*, article in Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond *Monthly Review*, July 1959.

*Statement of Representative William H. Natcher on the Rural Development Program in Butler County, Kentucky*, reported in the Congressional Record, March 25, 1959.

*The Church and the Rural Development Program*, Department of Town and Country Church, National Council of Churches, 1959.

*Operation Bootstrap The Rural Development Program*, Allis-Chalmers Manufacturing Company.

*Banking and the Rural Development Program*, Agricultural Commission, American Bankers Association, 1958.

*The Rural Development Program*, Farm Policy Forum, Iowa State College, Summer 1958.

*Rural Low Income and Rural Development Programs in the South*, report of National Planning Association, Agriculture Committee, February 1959.

*Discussions on the rural low income situation and Rural Development Program*, Association of Southern Agricultural Workers, Proceedings, 46th Annual Convention, February 1959.

*Cooperative Farm Credit Can Assist in Rural Development*, Farm Credit Administration, November 1958.

*The Agricultural Conservation Program Helps Rural Development*, Agricultural Conservation Program Service, December 1958.

*Rural Development*, Agricultural Research Magazine, Agricultural Research Service, May 1959.

*Rural Development -- Pulling Together for Greater Strength*, Extension Service Review, Federal Extension Service, March 1958.

*Work Group Reports and Addresses*, Rural Development Workshop, Jackson's Mill, West Virginia, May 1959.

*Michigan's Upper Peninsula Rural Resource Development Program*, Michigan State University, July 1959.

*Rural Development Program News*, Committee for Rural Development Program, Washington, D. C., issued bimonthly.

States issuing periodic Rural Development Program newsletters: Arkansas, Louisiana, Nebraska, North Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Washington.

## SELECTED RESEARCH REPORTS

(Issued by State experiment stations in cooperation with Agricultural Research Service or Agricultural Marketing Service.)

*Resources and Levels of Income of Farm and Rural Non-Farm Households in Eastern Missouri*, Missouri Agricultural Experiment Station Research Bulletin 661, March 1958.

*Sources and Levels of Income, Rural Households of North and West Florida*, Florida Experiment Station Agricultural Economics Mimeographed Report 59-4, October 1958.

*Employment and Underemployment of Rural People in the Ozarks*, Arkansas Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin 604, November 1958.

*Income, Employment Status and Changes in Calvert County*, Maryland Agricultural Experiment Station Miscellaneous Publication 326, August 1958.

*Resources and Incomes of Rural Families in the Coastal Plains Area of Georgia*, Georgia Agricultural Experiment Station, Mimeograph Series NS 74, April 1959.

*Personal and Environmental Obstacles to Production Adjustments on South Carolina Piedmont Area Farms*, South Carolina Agricultural Experiment Station, Bulletin 466, December 1958.

*Industrialization in Chickasaw County, A Study of Plant Workers*, Mississippi Experiment Station Bulletin 566, September 1958.

*Rural Industrialization in a Louisiana Community*, Louisiana Experiment Station Bulletin 524, June 1959.

*Approaches to Income Improvement in Agriculture, Experiences of Families Receiving Production Loans under the Farmers Home Administration*, Production Research Report 33, August 1959. (This is a publication of the Agricultural Research Service.)



RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM COUNTIES AND AREAS  
JULY 1959

ALABAMA	<u>KENTUCKY</u> ** (cont'd)	MONTANA	<u>TEXAS</u> **
Chilton*	Green	Lake*	Anderson
Fayette*	Hart	Ravalli*	Angelina
	Metcalfe*		Bowie
<u>ARKANSAS</u>	Monroe	<u>NEBRASKA</u> **	Camp*
Madison*		Boone	Cass
Ouachita*	LOUISIANA	Buffalo	Cherokee*
Phillips*	Avoyelles*	Custer	Delta
Van Buren*	Franklin*	Dawson	Franklin*
Woodruff*	Washington*	Greely	Freestone
Four-county Area		Howard	Gregg
Independence	MAINE	Sherman*	Harrison
Izard	Washington*	Valley	Henderson
Stone			Hopkins
Sharp	MARYLAND	NEVADA	Houston
	Garrett*	Lincoln*	Jasper
FLORIDA			Lamar
Suwannee*	<u>MICHIGAN</u> **	<u>NEW MEXICO</u> **	Leon
Washington*	Alger*	Bernalillo	Madison
	Baraga	Catron	Marion
GEORGIA	Chippewa	Guadalupe	Montgomery
Habersham*	Delta*	McKinley	Morris
Meriwether*	Dickinson	Mora	Nacogdoches
Twiggs*	Gogebic	Rio Arriba	Newton
Wayne*	Houghton	Sandoval*	Polk
	Iron	San Juan	Rains
<u>ILLINOIS</u>	Keweenaw	San Miguel	Red River
Alexander-	Luce	Santa Fe	Robertson
Pulaski Area	Mackinac*	Socorro	Rusk
	Marquette	Taos	Sabine
<u>INDIANA</u>	Menominee	Torrance	San Augustine*
Clark	Ontonagon	Valencia	San Jacinto
Crawford	Schoolcraft		Shelby*
Harrison		NORTH CAROLINA	Smith
Ohio	<u>MINNESOTA</u> **	Anson*	Titus*
Orange	Aikin	Bertie*	Trinity
Perry*	Beltrami	Watauga*	Tyler
Ripley	Carlton*		Upshur
Switzerland	Cass	OHIO	Van Zandt
	Clearwater	Guernsey*	Walker
<u>KENTUCKY</u> **	Cook	Monroe*	Wood
Ashland Area	Crow Wing		
Boyd	Hubbard*	OKLAHOMA	
Carter	Itasca*	Cherokee*	VIRGINIA
Elliott*	Kanabec	Choctaw*	Carroll*
Greenup	Koochiching	Latimer*	Cumberland*
Johnson	Lake		
Lawrence	Lake of the Woods	OREGON	
Lewis	Pine	Lincoln*	WASHINGTON
Magoffin	St. Louis		Stevens*
Martin		PENNSYLVANIA	
Morgan	MISSISSIPPI	Fayette*	<u>WEST VIRGINIA</u>
Rowan	Amite*	Schuylkill*	Braxton
Wolfe	Covington*		Fayette
Bowling Green Area	Holmes*	SOUTH CAROLINA	Gilmer
Allen	Newton	Bamberg*	Lewis*
Butler*	Tippah*	Berkeley*	Raleigh*
Edmonson		Chesterfield*	Summers
Logan	<u>MISSOURI</u>		Upshur
Simpson	Dent*	TENNESSEE	
Warren	Douglas*	Grainger*	WISCONSIN
Glasgow	Howell	Hardin*	Price*
Adair	Ozark	Houston*	Sawyer
Barren	Shannon	Macon*	
Cumberland	Taney*	Marion*	PUERTO RICO
			Cedro Arriba Area

States underscored have one or more area (multi-county) programs underway.

\*Original pilot counties.

\*\*Counties listed are included in general areas where rural and resource development work is being emphasized by State agencies, local groups. However, some of these counties do not presently have Rural Development Program type organization.

